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MINUTES

OF THE

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

28 February - 4 March, 1983

Meeting held at
John Knox Centre
Geneva, Switzerland

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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

John Knox Centre
Geneva, Switzerland

28 February - 4 March, 1983

1. OPENING ACTIONS

A. Introduction and worship

The opening service of worship, held in the chapel of the Ecumenical Centre, was led by the Ecumenical Women's Group. Morning worship on subsequent days was led by Dr Preus, Dr Simatupang, Metropolitan Chrysostomos and Archbishop Scott.

The meeting convened at 9.50 a.m. on Monday, 28 February.

On Thursday, 3 March, an apéritif for the Executive Committee and WCC staff was held at the Ecumenical Centre.

During its session the Executive Committee received a telegram of greetings and prayerful good wishes for its work from the Executive Committee of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches meeting near Zürich. In response, the WCC Executive Committee expressed its gratitude and recalled with appreciation the participation of the WARC in the work of the ecumenical movement and the WCC.

B. Roll call

The General Secretary called the roll of those attending, presenting apologies from Archbishop Sundby and Prof. Kyaw Than. He referred to the recent death of His Holiness Khoren I, Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia. His Holiness Karekin II had become Catholicos of that jurisdiction of the Armenian Church. At a later session His Holiness Karekin II paid tribute to His Holiness Khoren I.

C. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held at the John Knox Centre, Geneva, Switzerland, 15-17 July 1982, having been previously circulated, were confirmed.

D. Adoption of agenda

The General Secretary introduced the draft agenda, which was adopted.

E. Sub-Committees

The General Secretary indicated that, in view of the volume of work facing the Executive Committee, the Finance and Staffing and Nominations Sub-Committees would be asked to deal with a number of matters in addition to their normal work.

2. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

The General Secretary reported on activities and events since the last meeting of the Executive Committee. Activities had centred around Assembly preparations and major time, energy and resources had been devoted to organizing the 79 ecumenical team visits to more than 100 countries. These will have involved more than 400 people, including Assembly delegates and other participants, persons active in the life of the WCC, and staff. A number of regional and sub-regional meetings would have been attended by more than 200 delegates. In addition to involving delegates directly in the preparation of the Assembly the visits had stimulated the churches to be part of the Assembly process, and this method of relating directly to the churches had proved an effective way of communicating with them. The team visits had been an experience of ecumenical sharing, encounter and learning. They had provided an opportunity for inter-action between member churches, action groups, national councils and the WCC, and raised again the question of the specific role of the World Council. Visits and regional meetings would continue until the end of April and a fuller evaluation would be presented to the Executive Committee in July. Much staff work had also been done on preparations of the Nairobi to Vancouver report, working papers for the Issues and the details of the Assembly programme.

Three important meetings had been held and the General Secretary invited the staff concerned to report on them. Ms Assaad spoke of the meeting of the Advisory Group on the study on 'The Community of Women and Men in the Church', held in September 1982, to assess the study and consider next steps. The significance of the study was seen in its methodology whereby issues came from the grassroots, through regional groups, to the international consultation. The study was not just a women's concern but should be taken seriously by the churches as a whole. The Advisory Group had recommended that a way be found to enable further reflection on the inter-related issues raised by the study, with a staff person responsible for assuring the development of such a project and a Staff Task Force to work with the Advisory Group made up of representatives from each of the Units.

Fr Tsetsis presented the report on the Diakonia Seminar held from 22-26 November in Geneva. Some 30 people from various parts of the world related to diakonia met to prepare a statement for the Assembly on how Christian service had been understood and manifested since Nairobi and to help set the agenda for the churches in the years after the Sixth Assembly. They had discussed five case studies, engaged in bible study and had related their work particularly to two of the Assembly Issues: 'Healing and sharing

life in community' and 'Struggling for justice and human dignity'. Their report, including a series of recommendations, would be part of the documentation for these Issue Groups.

Dr Taylor reported on the meeting, on the theme 'The meaning of life', organized by DFI in Mauritius, 25 January - 3 February, for Assembly Guests of other faiths (Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Sikh and traditionalist) and a number of Christian delegates and advisers. Archbishop Huddleston had been an inspiring host. There had been a real theological and cultural exchange and it was hoped that the discussion in multi-faith groups of the eight Issues would contribute to the Assembly. A report would be published in The Ecumenical Review. Participants had prepared a message to be sent to Assembly participants which had been referred to the Assembly Preparations Committee.

The General Secretary reported briefly on a number of other Unit and sub-unit meetings and spoke of the Graduate School at Bossey which had just ended.

Turning to meetings of other bodies, he referred to the General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Ottawa which had condemned racism in the church as heresy. In September 1982 he had attended the Conventions of the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church and the Episcopal Church in the USA. The Lutheran churches had taken a decisive step towards becoming one church, and the United Presbyterian Church in the USA and the Presbyterian Church in the US had also agreed to unite. Decisions were also taken by the Lutheran and Episcopal churches to draw closer together. He had taken part in the celebrations of the 250th anniversary of Moravian mission in the Caribbean in December 1982.

Official visitors to the WCC had included the Moderator of the Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine, Polish church leaders, Prof. René Girard, and the Director-General of WHO. The Moderator of the Church of Scotland would be visiting the Council on 7 March.

The General Secretary listed a number of public issues which had occupied staff. The WCC had agreed to facilitate meetings between representatives of the churches in Britain and Argentina to discuss the Malvinas/Falklands situation. CCIA was preparing background information on the conflict. Representations had been made to the Israeli Government regarding its refusal to extend the visa of the Armenian Archbishop in Jerusalem. Staff had been in constant touch with the Church in Egypt and Mr Koshy had visited Egypt in December and seen Pope Shenouda. Mr Koshy spoke of his discussions, of the negotiations between the Church and Government in Egypt, and a number of developments in the country and in the region. He also reported on visits to Poland and the situation in that country. The Polish Ecumenical Council would hold its General Assembly later in March. He suggested that a message might be sent and that a number of concerns might be raised in this context. With regard to the Middle East, Mr Koshy referred to the Central Committee statement and emphasized the need for the withdrawal of foreign forces. The Middle East Council of Churches, together with the

WCC, was planning a meeting in Switzerland in May on 'Christian presence and witness in the Middle East'. This would include an evaluation of the situation of Jerusalem and relations among Christians, Jews and Muslims.

The General Secretary spoke of the deteriorating situation in a number of African countries since July 1982. The WCC had been in touch with the Christian Councils of Ghana and Nigeria and the Nigerian authorities regarding the expulsion of illegal immigrants from Nigeria. South Africa had continued its policy of destabilizing neighbouring countries and internal repression had intensified. The role of Dr Allan Boesak in the leadership of his own church and as President of WARC was of great importance. The Central American situation had also become critical. The newly inaugurated Latin American Council of Churches had made a strong statement and Dr Potter had sent a letter of solidarity which had been widely used in the area.

The General Secretary concluded his report by outlining the points to which he proposed to refer in his introduction of the 'Nairobi to Vancouver' report. These included: the rapid deterioration of the world situation and how the WCC as a community of churches spanning East and West, North and South, should react; the response of the churches to the new period of politicization of religion and the increasing influence of the political right wing among Christians; the relation of the Christian faith to the economic realities of the world; the growing concentration of power through the militarization of societies but at the same time the growing consciousness of the poor and oppressed of the need to take control of their own destinies; the search amid deep insecurities and despair for values which enable people to have a sense of human dignity and purpose.

With regard to the churches, the ecumenical movement and the WCC, the General Secretary spoke of the general tendency of churches and Christian World Communions to close their ranks rather than face the changes which greater unity would imply. Churches would have to decide whether the WCC was external to their life or an integral part of it. The main theme of his address to the Assembly would be on the nature of the WCC and the nature of its relations with the member churches.

* * *

In the discussion of the report a number of comments were made about the value of the ecumenical team visits. Metropolitan Gregorios felt it had been a major mistake to suspend programmes for two years in order to concentrate on the visits. Other members spoke appreciatively of the visits as a method of communicating with the churches and of reaching Christians at the local level. The need for a full evaluation before the Assembly, including the reactions of the churches visited, was stressed. Metropolitan Antonie expressed disappointment that the report on the Sheffield Consultation on 'The Community of Women and Men in the Church' had not yet been published. The General Secretary regretted that various circumstances had delayed publication but, as agreed in Dresden, the report would be sent to the churches with a covering letter from himself as

soon as possible. With regard to the place of the WCC in the life of the churches, Metropolitan Gregorios warned of the dangers of by-passing the formal leadership of the churches and relating directly to the constituency. Dr Preus spoke of the problems created for local congregations by the number of programmes set up at both national and international level. This tended to lead to the desire to concentrate on 'the simple Gospel' rather than deal with matters which were seen as 'political'.

At a later session the General Secretary paid tribute to the Rev. Aharon Sapsezian who for twelve years had served ecumenical work in theological education through the Theological Education Fund and the Programme on Theological Education.

3. SIXTH ASSEMBLY

I. REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY PREPARATIONS COMMITTEE

Ms Webb presented the report of the Assembly Preparations Committee (APC) which had met from 24-26 February. The Committee expressed its gratitude for the cooperation of the staff and the Vancouver Planning Committee. (A summary of the report as finally adopted appears below.)

In discussion a number of amendments and changes in the programme were suggested. Dr Visser 't Hooft and others expressed concern about the proposed contribution of representatives of other faiths to the plenary on Sub-theme I and a number of proposals for omission or rearrangement were made. Members agreed that there should be no suggestion that Christians regarded the sacred books of other faiths as on the same level as Christian scriptures. Ms Webb pointed out that the intention was not to accept but to hear the affirmations of life made by others. With regard to the plenary on Sub-theme III, Bishop Harms protested against the inclusion of a theologian, Dr Dorothee Sölle, who was a controversial figure in the Evangelical Church in Germany as the presenter of the programme. He was afraid this would lead to a further deterioration of relations between the EKD and the WCC. Ms Webb said that speakers were not invited as representatives of their church but because it was felt they had something to contribute to the Assembly. Dr Lazareth spoke of the moving contribution Dorothee Sölle had made to the pre-Assembly theological meeting at Grandchamp in December 1981. It was felt that for Sub-theme IV there should be two economists representing both the developed and developing parts of the world. It was agreed that throughout the Assembly the issue of peace must always be spoken of in the context of justice.

Dr Raiser spoke of a number of initiatives being taken by Christian groups from various countries which hoped to put pressure on the Assembly to give special consideration to their concerns. The Assembly would have to be careful to preserve its integrity in setting its own agenda. The General Secretary pointed out that the concerns of some of the groups (e.g. peace, human rights) were included in the Issues. The Assembly did not receive petitions sent in by groups other than the member churches but the

Business Committee would give consideration to any resolution proposed by a delegate.

The report of the APC was referred to the Programme Sub-Committee.

At a later session His Holiness Karekin II presented the report of the Sub-Committee. After discussion and further amendment, the Executive Committee agreed:

i. to receive the report of the APC, to approve it as amended, and to authorize staff to take the necessary steps for completing the process of Assembly preparation;

ii. to express appreciation on behalf of the Central Committee for the way in which the APC has carried out its task and to all those who have contributed to this process.

The following is a summary of the APC report and the Assembly programme as amended.

A. PROGRAMME

1. PLENARY SESSIONS

a. Main theme: There will be two occasions in which the main theme is the major focus: the opening worship and the first plenary session (2 speakers). There will be three approaches to the main theme: (i) pastoral-experiential: the sermon; (ii) biblical-dogmatic: the first plenary address; (iii) prophetic-contextual: the second plenary address.

- Opening worship: Preacher: Pauline Webb, Methodist, Great Britain

- Main theme plenary

i. The Word of Life (8 minutes): A meditative, audio-visual presentation, centred probably on images of life and of Jesus Christ, followed by a brief period of reflection.

ii. First presentation of the theme (25 minutes)
Speaker: Theodore Stylianopoulis, Orthodox, professor of New Testament at Holy Cross School of Theology, Brookline, Mass., USA.

A sung affirmation: Jesus Christ - the Life of the World

iii. Second presentation of the theme (25 minutes)
Speaker: Allan Boesak, minister of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingskerk of South Africa and moderator of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

iv. An act of commitment (8 minutes).

b. Sub-themes

Sub-theme I: Life a Gift of God

i. Theological presentation (25 minutes)
Speaker: Archbishop John Vikström of the Lutheran Church of Finland.

ii. The mystery or mastery of life (15 minutes)
A response from a scientist: John Francis, UK

iii. Testimonies (15 minutes)
- The beauty of life, as seen by a mother: Setembeso Nyoni, Zimbabwe
- The beauty of nature, as seen by a native Canadian confronted with increasing environmental problems.

iv. Affirmation of life by people of other living faiths (Hindu, Buddhist, Jew, Moslem) (15 minutes)
(For instance, through brief readings from the sacred scriptures of other faiths.)

v. Artistic presentation (10 minutes)
A dance group or mime witnessing to the goodness of God's creation.

vi. A common hymn or acclamation by the Assembly.

Sub-theme II: Life Confronting and Overcoming Death

i. Testimonies (60 minutes)
Couched in audio-visual display, probably slides and music. Initial 10 minutes would be visual impressions of the variety of ways in which death manifests itself in the world.

Speakers: Domitila Barrios de Chungara, Bolivia
Misaeri Kauma, Uganda
Helen Caldicott, USA
Anezka Ebertova, Czechoslovakia
Frieda Haddad, Lebanon

ii. Theological reflection (20 minutes)
Speaker: Park Hyung-Kyu, Korea, a former moderator of the Presbyterian Church.

Sub-theme III: Life in Fullness

i. Experience of emptiness and aspiration for fullness (25 minutes)
Presented by Dorothee Sölle, FRG, at present professor of Systematic Theology and Ethics, Union Theological Seminary, New York, who should be encouraged to draw into the presentation other voices, experiences, either through testimonies/dialogue or through pieces of poetry, meditative texts.

Bishop Harms and Dr Preus opposed this section of the report and Dr Simatupang abstained from voting.

ii. Christ promises life in its fullness (25 minutes)
An Orthodox monk to be invited to make a presentation; in addition, a briefer contribution to be sought from a person of charismatic background and experience.

iii. Life in its fullness as a gift of the Spirit (25 minutes)
Four testimonies, including a strong evangelical and a Roman Catholic voice, the four persons to be selected taking into account the need for reasonable regional balance among the participants in this session. The names of participants, including two young people, in addition to those already indicated, should be drawn from persons who are known to be present at the Assembly.

iv. Act of response by the Assembly (5 minutes)

The entire session should be presided over by a woman President.

Sub-theme IV: Life in Unity

i. Film (15 minutes)
A colour film, accompanied by a recorded commentary with music, will centre devotional meditation on the Trinity icon of Andrej Rublov.

ii. Theological presentation (25 minutes)
Speaker: Protopresbyter Vitaly Borovoy, Russian Orthodox.

iii. Slide showing (5 minutes)
A series of slides, interspersing (a) religious art depicting the feeding and healing miracles of Christ and (b) current examples of efforts of churches, along with humanitarian and governmental agencies, to promote a more just, participatory and sustainable society through structural change, aid and development.

iv. Economics presentation (25 minutes)
Speakers: Jan Pronk, Reformed, Netherlands; UNCTAD
A third world economist (to be named)
Ways should be found to bring the two economic presentations into inter-action, either by choosing an interview style or by asking both speakers to respond to the same set of basic questions.

v. Litany (15 minutes)
A concluding rite would centre on the reaffirmation of the apostolic faith and the distribution of blessed bread (not Eucharist) to the entire Assembly, led by a group representative of the different churches and regions. Care should be taken to use other kinds of bread/food as well as the variety common in Canada to respect cultural diversity.

c. Pacific plenary: The Pacific plenary is planned as an exposition of the Assembly theme in a concrete situation where the life of the powerless is threatened by the powerful. It will include presentations on:

- the people of the Pacific and the way they experience life as a gift of God and understand life in its fullness from their own background;

- the many threats to life they are facing, concentrating on the nuclear and cultural threats, and the response of the churches;

- the call to the Pacific nations and to the rest of the world for a new life in unity and solidarity.

d. Canadian plenary: Details are still being worked out by the Canadian churches for a staged performance which would involve actors, musicians, dancers and slides. It would explain how Jesus Christ, the Life of the World, can be seen in the events of Canadian history, in the holding together of many different peoples, and how death-dealing principalities and powers are seen in the dynamics which separate the peoples. The struggle of Canadian Christians to participate with Christ in bringing life is seen as inseparable from the nation's struggle to recognize the contradictions within its life and hold them together.

e. Plenary on Peace and Justice: The open plenary on 4 August will be reserved for a debate on peace and justice, based, if possible, on a draft proposal for a public statement prepared by the Policy Reference Committee and using Assembly resources without calling on additional outside speakers. Given the significance of this session, the speakers to introduce the discussion should be chosen by the Officers well ahead of time in order to ensure careful preparation.

2. WORKING AGENDAS FOR ISSUE GROUPS

The Programme Sub-Committee examined in detail the drafts of Working Agendas for the eight Issue Groups at the Assembly as well as the comments approved by the Assembly Preparations Committee. With the understanding that the observations and suggestions of the Programme Sub-Committee would also be taken into account in the process of finalizing these texts, the Executive Committee agreed to approve the Working Agendas for Issue Groups and to authorize their publication as part of the Workbook for the Vancouver Assembly.

The WCC Officers had already approved the names of persons for leadership in the Issue Groups as moderators, vice-moderators and reporters. The APC recommended that the Officers be authorized to approve the selection of persons to be invited to give the main presentations in the Issue Groups. (See section on Assembly Leadership below.)

3. SMALL GROUPS AND CLUSTERS

During the first week of the Assembly, the task of Small Groups and Clusters is essentially the same, though the style of work may be different: they are meant to enable the Assembly to reflect on the theme. This reflection should provide the main elements that could be taken up in the Message of the Assembly.

The nature of Small Groups and Clusters differs. Small Groups are a more intimate place of sharing, a home base, where people can wrestle with bringing together their own different contexts and the Assembly context always in the light of the theme and the way it is illuminated during the different plenary presentations on the theme and sub-themes. Clusters continue the work of Small Groups in a larger group and in a more focused way.

Earlier proposals suggested that each Small Group would have pre-selected one of the four sub-themes. However, the actual timetable of the Assembly may lead to certain frustrations in practice. Therefore the Small Groups should be freed from devoting themselves only to one sub-theme and invited to reflect on the theme in its totality. Discussion on one of the sub-themes might still emerge as a major focus of a particular Cluster.

Instead of the first meeting of Cluster groups on 28 July, the moderators of those Small Groups which form a Cluster should meet with the leaders of their particular Cluster to prepare the work of the Clusters.

The Cluster reports to the plenary sessions would reflect the main insights of the Assembly on the theme, and would serve as basic input for the work of the Message Committee. Members of that Committee would participate in each of the Clusters.

During the second week the Small Groups should be encouraged to decide themselves about the focus of their work - whether they wish to follow the agenda of the day, to undertake a series of bible studies or to use other methods of work.

Each Small Group will have a moderator. Each Cluster will have two co-moderators and a reflector who could help Clusters to focus their discussion by drawing attention to significant insights emerging.

4. PROGRAMME HEARINGS

There will be four simultaneous hearings for Units I, II and III and the General Secretariat. Their purpose is to react to and discuss the official report 'Nairobi to Vancouver', and articulate proposals for the future work of the Council. Therefore two periods should be provided for Programme Hearings, related to the two distinct functions. The first period should be scheduled for 28 July and should focus on the report 'Nairobi to Vancouver'. The Hearing on 6 August should focus on the perspectives for future work emerging from the discussions in the Assembly up to that point, and in particular from the deliberations of the Programme Guidelines Committee (PGC). Both Hearings should be conducted under the auspices of the PGC. This will enable the PGC to hear comments and questions from delegates first on the official report and second on their preliminary observations and conclusions regarding the future work of the WCC following the Assembly before finalizing their recommendations.

5. REGIONAL MEETINGS

The Assembly programme as adopted by Central Committee sets aside periods for regional meetings. In each of the regions, except Asia, a regional preparatory meeting for delegates will have taken place prior to the Assembly. The results of these meetings will have implications for the agenda of the regional meetings at the Assembly. Delegates from Asia, who have so far met only in three sub-regional meetings, will have their pre-Assembly meeting on the afternoon and evening of 23 July.

An inter-regional meeting of the leaders of regional groups could be organized halfway through the Assembly in order to identify areas of common concern which would have to be addressed during the second period of regional discussion.

6. WITNESS FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

The APC agreed last July that a special peace event should be held in connection with Hiroshima Day, 6 August. It is suggested that this should start on the evening of 5 August and should include a public witness on the beach, and an all-night vigil ending at dawn. This would be an action of the Assembly to which the Vancouver community could be invited.

The Worship Committee is asked to give careful thought to the prayer-vigil and to consider including in it the meditation of guests of other living faiths as well as Christians.

In addition to the special plenary on peace and justice and the witness and vigil for peace and justice, it is envisaged that these issues will also be brought before the Assembly through the Public Programme, presentation in the Visitors' Programme, the Women's Programme, the film festival, and through debate in Issue Groups leading to recommendations for action by the churches.

7. REVISED PROGRAMME DESIGN

The Assembly programme as revised appears in Appendix III.

8. VISITORS' PROGRAMME

An outline of the Visitors' Programme was approved by the APC. Visitors will be welcome to attend daily worship and plenary sessions. No programmes are planned to conflict with plenaries or 'scheduled' free time. The Public Programme, the Agora, the Well, and the Peace and Justice Centre will be open to visitors.

During the second morning session on nine days, visitors may select from five different parallel series. On six afternoons, special programmes for visitors will be offered.

In addition, there will be daily briefings, video replays, and Small Groups and Issue Groups for accredited visitors.

9. OTHER CONCERNS

It was brought to the attention of the APC and Executive Committee that certain concerns were being promoted by other groups, partly within, as well as outside, the member churches, which could have an impact on the Assembly. These issues, mainly in the areas of human rights and peace, could result in actions which might affect the integrity of the Assembly. The APC recognized that there was ample constitutional provision for specific issues to be raised by delegates and that the issues of human rights and peace were on the agenda of the Assembly.

The Programme Sub-Committee, having considered the best ways of responding to initiatives reportedly planned by outside groups during the Assembly recommended, and the Executive Committee agreed, that the Business Committee be urged to ensure that any debates take place on the terms of WCC stated policy. A number of other proposals of the Sub-Committee in this connection were held over for further consideration and discussion at the next Executive Committee meeting.

10. GUESTS OF OTHER FAITHS

Recommendations from the DFI meeting in Mauritius were reviewed and some have been incorporated into the programme plans. In addition, the APC recommended and the Executive Committee agreed, that:

i. the guests of other faiths be welcomed at the opening session of the Assembly (with an explanatory comment on their presence) and that one of them be asked to respond on behalf of all;

ii. they be distributed as evenly as possible, taking account of their preferences, in the Issue Groups, and that moderators encourage their participation, as well as that of all guests;

iii. the message from the Mauritius meeting be distributed to all Assembly participants with a clear and full introduction explaining clearly the nature of the meeting, the participants and the status of the message.

The Vancouver Planning Committee and the local Interfaith Committee were asked to make provision in the public programme for a place where interfaith conversation can take place, and also to make it possible for Assembly participants of other faiths to have opportunities for worship with their fellow believers in the Vancouver community, to which they could invite Assembly participants who might wish to attend.

11. VANCOUVER PLANNING COMMITTEE

The APC received with deep appreciation a full report on plans being made by the VPC for local arrangements and programmes. A wide range of activities is being offered to enhance the Assembly experience for official participants and to draw people from the

local community into the life of the Assembly.

Special mention was made of the work of the VPC with regard to the opening day public celebration, the Host Programme, the Visitation Programme in local churches for Sunday, 7 August, the Public Programme, and the significant plans for native Canadian presence and participation being developed with native elders, and discussion of native issues and concerns.

B. WORSHIP

The APC heard a report from the Assembly Worship Committee on plans for worship at the Assembly, which was accepted by the Executive Committee. It included the following main items:

1. WORSHIP RESOURCE BOOK

Work on the Worship Resource Book has been completed. It will have material arranged according to the four sub-themes, as well as prayers and litanies for various worship occasions of the Assembly. The music section will supplement Cantate Domino, the official hymnal for the Assembly.

2. MAJOR WORSHIP EVENTS

a. Opening worship: The opening worship is being designed as the gathering together of churches, cultures and peoples for the celebration of Life offered in Christ. The event will begin symbolically in the worship tent, with a procession to the plenary hall where the opening sermon will be delivered. The Assembly will be formally opened towards the close of this service.

b. The Open Eucharist: The Lima liturgy will be used for the Open Eucharist. A group of ordained ministers will be asked to concelebrate, dividing up the service amongst themselves, but all engaging in the prayers and act of consecration. This group would consist of a president of the Eucharist and six others from various Protestant traditions from various parts of the world, including at least two women.

c. The Orthodox Eucharist: The Orthodox Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom will be led by Archbishop Iakovos. Consideration is being given to build in ways in which Christians of other traditions who will attend the worship would take some active part in the worship through singing, etc. Blessed bread will be shared with participants.

d. Witness for Peace and Justice: This event will culminate in an act of worship in the tent that will mark the beginning of the all-night Peace Vigil. The Vigil will conclude with Eucharist in the early hours of the morning.

e. Closing worship: Some elements of the closing worship will be discussed and planned in advance, but the event itself will be given shape during the Assembly. This will be designed to capture the mood of the Assembly, to reflect its major concerns, and to gather all sections of the Assembly's life in a final act of celebration and commitment.

3. DAILY WORSHIP OF THE ASSEMBLY

The Assembly will begin each day with half an hour of worship in the tent. Some lunch hour worship events will take place in collaboration with the Visitors' Programme. There will be a closing act of worship daily in the plenary hall, in the groups or in the tent as the programme for the day demands.

4. OTHER WORSHIP FACILITIES

a. Daily Eucharist;

b. Provision for continued prayer presence, possibly in the tent;

c. Assembly choir and occasions to learn the Assembly music.

The Assembly Worship Committee will meet in May 1983 to finalize plans for Assembly worship.

C. PRE-ASSEMBLY EVENTS

1. YOUTH

The APC reviewed and approved plans for the pre-Assembly Youth Event. Limitations of space for plenary meetings in the Event indicate that the total number of invitations should not exceed 300.

2. WOMEN

The APC also reviewed and approved plans for the pre-Assembly Women's Meeting. Participation will be limited to Assembly delegates, Advisers, representatives of organizations and networks related to the WCC Women's Desk who are official Assembly participants, and Guests. Some members of the local Vancouver planning group will also be invited, as well as a few journalists.

D. COMMUNICATION

1. OFFICIAL REPORT: 'NAIROBI TO VANCOUVER'

The Sub-Committees examined the drafts of the chapters on Programme Units I, II and III, the General Secretariat and Finance for the official report 'Nairobi to Vancouver' and expressed appreciation for the clear presentation of the activities of the WCC, its Units and sub-units during this period. They considered the drafts as very satisfactory in general and transmitted to the responsible staff a list of points where the presentation could be improved. With the understanding that these points would be taken into account in the final editorial process, the Executive Committee agreed to approve the drafts of these chapters for inclusion in the official report 'Nairobi to Vancouver'.

2. WORKBOOK

The APC reviewed and approved the table of contents for the Assembly Workbook. The Workbook will be published and distributed at the same time as the 'Nairobi to Vancouver' report.

3. OTHER PUBLICATIONS

An Assembly Directory will be published for distribution on arrival which will contain specific information about people and places, meeting rooms, telephone numbers and other practical information about local arrangements. There will also be a Who's Who listing of participants.

The text of a prayer leaflet was also reviewed and approved by the APC. This is designed to be sent to all member churches, councils and Assembly participants with the hope that it will be widely adapted, translated and distributed for use in local congregations before and during the Assembly.

4. DISPLAYS

The APC heard and approved plans for the three major visual elements: the central exhibit, information corridors and banner towers. There will also be an exhibit in downtown Vancouver. Plans for decoration/design of the plenary hall (a sports hall) are still under discussion and have been entrusted to the staff and the VPC.

5. PRESS PARTICIPATION

336 requests for accreditation have been received so far, and 250 have been approved. Almost all of the third world applications are dependent on financial assistance, but funds are available for only about 30 such press scholarships.

Pre-Assembly briefings for press, carried out extensively in North America in 1981/82, will concentrate on Europe in the next two months with sessions in London, Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Uppsala, sponsored in association with local member churches and councils. A briefing in France took place earlier this month.

6. FILM FESTIVAL

With the help of Interfilm, a two-week programme is being arranged. The first week uses eight feature films to explore the theme and sub-themes; the second week will cover the eight Issues with a wide variety of shorter documentaries.

E. PROGRAMME OF VISITATION AND REGIONAL MEETINGS

The process of ecumenical team visits and regional meetings has almost come to an end: only a few visits are still to come, and regional meetings will still be held in the Pacific, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

Since the beginning of April 1982, 79 visits have taken place to churches in more than 100 countries; almost 400 persons were

involved (165 Assembly delegates, 13 other Assembly participants, 148 others related to the ecumenical movement and 70 staff of the WCC).

Eight regional and sub-regional meetings have taken place which were attended by approximately 200 delegates. In addition, many delegates have been part of the preparatory process as hosts of visiting teams, or through national preparatory efforts organized by the churches themselves.

Though the response of the churches to this new way of preparing the Assembly was slow in coming, it surpassed all expectations. Many more visits than originally foreseen have been organized together with the churches in a relatively short time. The overwhelming feedback is that this particular way of relating to the churches is a most effective, genuine and participatory style of communication.

A number of insights are emerging which clearly have implications beyond the Assembly, particularly for the style of work of the WCC and for the nurture of relationships in the ecumenical fellowship:

- the process has been an important symbol of 'ecumenical sharing';
- the process confirmed and deepened many of the pedagogical premises of 'ecumenical learning';
- the process turned out to be an important step toward writing 'a history of the ecumenical movement from below'. This needs further thought and analysis.

In order to obtain a more objective assessment of the visits, hosts and team visit members will be invited to share their evaluation. Together with the team visit reports and feedback from team members and churches/communities visited, it will be the basis for an in-depth evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation will be to give an account to the churches visited of the total process and what it means for the ecumenical movement.

An interim report of the visitation programme will appear in the April 1983 issue of The Ecumenical Review.

F. LANGUAGES

Having received reports that the Ecumenical Patriarchate was prepared to meet the expenses of providing for a limited use of Greek as a working language at the Assembly, the Programme Sub-Committee recommended, and the Executive Committee agreed, that the necessary steps be taken to follow up this proposal in consultation with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in order to determine the needs and modalities of making this provision.

G. FINANCE

The budgetary situation for the Assembly was reviewed by the APC. Appreciation was expressed for the efforts which had been made

by staff to reduce budgeted expenses for various aspects of the Assembly and which had resulted in a more positive outlook with regard to the financial situation. It was noted with satisfaction that some further savings might be possible. The APC therefore agreed to ask the Executive Committee to authorize the overrun and to secure the necessary funds for the programme as planned by the APC.

II. ASSEMBLY PARTICIPANTS

In addition to its actions on the report of the APC, the Executive Committee received reports from the Nominations Sub-Committee on a number of matters which had been referred to it.

A. Assembly leadership

Ms Skuse reported that the Sub-Committee had reviewed proposals regarding the leadership of Clusters, Issue Groups and Committees and submitted lists of names of persons recommended for approval. Names of persons proposed by the Programme Sub-Committee for plenary session leadership were also appended.

The Executive Committee:

i. approved the proposed names;

ii. noted that 65 Small Group leaders were still to be named;

iii. authorized the Officers to complete the appointment of persons to leadership positions in the Assembly, taking into account the concerns expressed in the Sub-Committee and the need for adequate regional and confessional balance;

iv. agreed that persons named as theological reflectors for the Clusters or as speakers in the plenary sessions who are not otherwise participants in the Assembly be invited as Advisers.

Dr McCloud stressed the need for the Officers to give special consideration to confessional disparities in completing the appointments to leadership positions.

B. Assembly delegates - 15%

Following the nominations approved by Central Committee, 23 additional names had been approved by the Officers in December. On the recommendation of the Nominations Sub-Committee, the Executive Committee agreed to accept an additional 16 persons, subject to ratification by their churches. In addition, three places were reserved for persons to be named by particular churches.

C. Advisers

In addition to the persons named by Central Committee in July and by the Officers in December, the Executive Committee agreed to appoint three more Advisers.

D. Guests

The Officers had agreed in December to invite a number of persons as Guests. The Executive Committee agreed to a number of additional names, including 15 persons proposed by DFI to represent other faiths. It was further agreed that the heads of the churches in Canada and in British Columbia who are not otherwise attending the Assembly be invited as Guest Representatives of the Canadian churches.

E. Delegated Representatives

The Officers had agreed that some of the regional and national councils and confessional organizations could be granted two places instead of one. The Executive Committee agreed to offer an additional place to eight such bodies.

F. Observers

On the recommendation of the Nominations Sub-Committee, the Executive Committee agreed that an invitation to send an Observer to the Assembly be sent to a number of churches and organizations related to the WCC which had requested this.

G. Further nominations

The Executive Committee agreed:

i. to authorize the Officers to complete the process of nomination of 15% delegates and Advisers, to issue further invitations to Guests and to respond to any requests to send Delegated Representatives or Observers;

ii. that the Officers should review the composition of the Business Committee of the Assembly according to the WCC Rules and bring proposals to the Executive Committee in July with regard to a balanced representation in the Business Committee.

REVIEW OF STRUCTURES, POLICIES AND WORKING METHODS

A. Progress report

The General Secretary referred to the discussions on structures, policies and working methods in the Executive Committee in February 1982 and the request of the Committee for a review of decision-making, implementing, geographical, consultative and communication structures. In the following months three main elements in the review of structures had been identified:

a. The setting up of a Resource Sharing System by stages for the whole Council: The Central Committee in July 1982 had received the report and recommendations of the Consultation on Resource Sharing held in February 1982 and had requested staff to seek to implement the new system and report on progress to the Executive Committee in February 1983. This report was before the Committee.

b. Regional relationships: One of the major points emerging from the ecumenical team visits was the immense importance of the WCC's relations within regions. The Council should rethink its relationship with churches and councils and the effect of this on structures and working methods.

c. Decision-making and implementing structures: One of the main difficulties facing the WCC had always been how it relates to its member churches. The programme given to the Council by the churches was carried out through a variety of networks and constituencies. Central Committee in July 1982 had indicated that the Programme Unit framework should be strengthened. This implied that the Unit Committees should become the place of decision-making for the Units and not simply reference committees of Central Committee. The Programme Unit staff had tried to work on this proposal which would consolidate the role of the Unit Committees, according to the by-laws given to them, with regard to policy and programme supervision, the commissions and working groups being mainly advisory. After considerable discussion of this proposal it was acknowledged that the place where there is serious discourse on programme and policy has been precisely in the commissions and working groups, and that actual experience had shown that the Unit Committees, as they are constituted and function at present, have not been able to fulfil the expectations demanded of them. It now appeared that another proposal was more realistic and would enable the Central Committee to carry out its functions more effectively. It was suggested that the Programme Units and the General Secretariat should have an executive group to ensure coordination within Units and to monitor common concerns, and that to strengthen the relations with Central Committee, the moderators of the Units should be members of the Executive Committee and one of the officers of the commission or working group be a member of Central Committee. It was further suggested that Core Groups be selected in terms of the Units as a whole. The Executive Committee in July would have to make some proposals about Core Groups, which would be appointed by the new Central Committee immediately after the Assembly.

A number of questions for clarification of the proposals on decision-making and implementing structures were answered by the General Secretary. Several members expressed support for the effort to bring key representatives of Units and sub-units into the central decision-making bodies.

B. Report on the Resource Sharing System and Regional Relationships

Dr Raiser presented the report on resource sharing and regional relationships. It had become clear that the two subjects were inseparable and the paper contained the reports of two staff task forces which had worked closely together. He underlined that all the elements of the new Resource Sharing System (RSS) were subject to modification in the light of experience and, in particular, specific details would have to be worked out for each region. He also stressed that although the paper dealt with the sharing of material resources, it must be seen in the context of the total sharing through the WCC, including spiritual, human, theological and other non-material resources.

The main insights emerging from the discussion on regional relationships included the following: (a) given the diversity of regional situations, it would be unrealistic to aim at a general statement of WCC policy on regional relationships; (b) the member churches are the primary partners of the WCC in its relationships with the constituency; (c) the diversity of national situations must therefore be studied; (d) consideration must also be given to relationships with various other ecumenical organizations and the Christian World Communions, etc.; (e) ways must be found to liberate relationships from the sharing of resources.

In discussion His Holiness Karekin II spoke of the impact of the team visit to the Middle East and the importance of the WCC being in relationship with the member churches in the region. Archbishop Kirill expressed fears that the creation of a centrally located Office on Resource Sharing would weaken the activity of the sub-units, and suggested that the whole proposed new system required further study with the full involvement of the churches after the Assembly. The General Secretary pointed out that the matter had been under discussion for a long time and that the Central Committee had instructed staff to proceed with the implementation of the new system and report on progress to the Executive Committee. Dr Preus felt that the best relationship-building had been done by staff dealing with their programme concerns, whereas relationships seemed in future to be regarded as an end in themselves. Dr Kang spoke of the difficulties in relationships between the WCC and regional organizations. Strong WCC action tended to weaken the regional body. Metropolitan Gregorios said that the Central Committee had given the Executive Committee a mandate to pursue the matter but not to make decisions on changes of structure. He suggested that the relationship between the WCC and the churches was less important than that between the churches in the local situation. The WCC could best help the churches in India, for instance, by locating a staff person there to assist in the local sharing of resources, especially human resources. With regard to administrative changes, the Council must respect its commitments to allow a certain autonomy to some sub-units. He expressed concern about the concentration of too much 'money power' in one Desk.

Ms Jiagge, Mr Leite and Mr Ashmall stressed that the proposals had already been fully discussed and the Executive Committee mandated to take a decision. It would be unfair to shift the responsibility to the new Central Committee which had not gone through the whole process.

Dr Raiser replied to some of the points raised in discussion. The question of resource sharing had been the subject of a widespread, representative and responsible process of study since the Nairobi Assembly. There was no intention of regarding relationships as an end in themselves. The report was trying to say that programme and relationships belonged together. Problems of regional relationships would be worked out with the regional bodies concerned.

The report, together with a paper on the role and function of the WCC New York Office, which had been examined in the context of the wider review of structures and in consultation with leaders of US member churches, was referred to the Staffing Sub-Committee.

At a later session Ms Skuse presented the Sub-Committee's report.

A. Progress report

The Sub-Committee had reviewed the progress report on the review of structures, policies and working methods mandated by the Executive Committee in February 1982. It proposed guidelines as a basis for recommendations by the Executive Committee to the new Central Committee.

After discussion and one amendment the Executive Committee adopted the guidelines as follows:

a. Central Committee, which has clear responsibility and authority for determining and overseeing the implementation of policy and programme, including finance and staffing, needs to be enabled to fulfil this task more effectively.

b. Central Committee should be guided in its task by the Unit Committees, which function as Policy Reference Committees.

c. To facilitate the work of these Reference Committees, the Programme Units and a unit for the General Secretariat should each have an executive or coordinating group to ensure continuous cooperation and coordination within the Unit, and to monitor common concerns, particularly with regard to finance and staffing. Each group would be made up of the officers and Staff Moderator of the Unit, the officers and directors of the sub-units or departments, and possibly other designated persons.

d. The Units should function in such a way as to promote as close working relations as possible among the sub-units and, through the General Secretariat, between the Units. To strengthen the relations with the Central Committee, the Moderators of the Units should preferably be members of the Executive Committee or be invited to attend its meetings as Consultants. One of the officers of each commission or working group should be a member of Central Committee.

e. Core groups should be appointed by the new Central Committee and would be responsible for making proposals for action by the Central Committee in July 1984. A core group should be appointed for each Unit, composed of core groups of each sub-unit. Each Unit group should have a maximum of 30 members. Core groups should all meet at the same time and same place prior to the first meeting of the new Executive Committee in 1984. The Executive Committee in July will need to make recommendations to the new Central Committee with regard to the composition of the core groups.

B. Resource Sharing System and Regional Relationships

Ms Skuse explained a number of revisions made in the report and presented the recommendations contained in it. Dr Raiser explained that for the time being the Office on Resource Sharing would consist of one executive staff person and an administrative assistant. Metropolitan Gregorios expressed hesitancy about the recommendations in view of the uncertainty of the financial situation. The decision should be made by the Assembly and he did not feel that there would be any harm in postponement for a year. Mr Coïdan said that at present the budget for the Office was still within CICARWS. Dr Raiser added that the Officers of CICARWS had reviewed the proposal and promised their support, including financial support.

The Executive Committee agreed:

i. to receive the report on the Resource Sharing System and Regional Relationships, as revised (Appendix IV);

ii. to the setting up of an Office on Resource Sharing related to the General Secretariat through one of the Deputy General Secretaries;

iii. to the formation of WCC regional resource sharing groups with a view to arranging for the first meetings in 1984;

iv. to the formation of regional task forces composed of staff with regional assignments from each Programme Unit and the General Secretariat.

Metropolitan Gregorios voted against these recommendations.

C. New York Office

The Sub-Committee had reviewed the report on the need for and the task of the New York Office. It had been noted that the 'Nairobi to Vancouver' report outlined the history and development of the Office over the past 50 years and the continuing need for it. It recommended, and the Executive Committee agreed, that the following functions be accepted as the basis for the work of the New York Office in the period following the Vancouver Assembly:

a. To facilitate the flow of information and the establishment of relationships between the North American member churches and the WCC (in both directions). This includes keeping before the churches the concerns of the WCC, providing information about WCC programmes, and bringing to the attention of the General Secretary the concerns and work of the North American churches, and any other relevant matters in the North American scene.

b. To provide interpretation/education about the WCC and its work to North American churches, agencies, networks, etc., and to church and secular media, and to relay to Geneva responses, questions, requests, etc. This would also mean facilitating the systematic flow of WCC publications and reports, etc. to the North American churches and other groups.

c. To cooperate with and facilitate the work of OICD with regard to fund-raising in North America as requested and to provide financial accounting services as required.

d. To provide services to Geneva staff visiting North America with regard to briefing, itineraries, contacts, etc., and to WCC sub-unit programmes holding meetings in North America.

e. To provide staff services as needed for the US Conference for the WCC which is a channel for the involvement of the US member churches in the life of the WCC and which also provides the base of a legal corporation for US citizens employed in Geneva and for the sale of subvention certificates on behalf of EDCS.

f. To further close cooperation and coordination with the NCCCUSA by providing liaison services to facilitate relationships between NCCCUSA staff/programmes/departments and their appropriate Geneva counterparts.

5. ORTHODOX MATTERS FOLLOWING THE SOFIA CONSULTATION

Dr Lazareth presented a progress report on the study on the advisability of including a reference to baptism in the WCC Basis, in response to one of the recommendations of the WCC Consultation with Eastern Orthodox Churches held in Sofia in May 1981. A dossier had been sent to sixteen church leaders and theologians (eight Orthodox and eight non-Orthodox). A total of seven responses (two from Orthodox and five from non-Orthodox) had been received. All of the responses were opposed to the inclusion of baptism in the Basis at this time, particularly in view of the reception process of the text on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry. A number of other arguments and significant considerations raised in the responses were summarized in the report.

In discussion, Metropolitan Chrysostomos expressed gratitude for the report though he had reservations about some of the points made in the responses as stated in the report. The next Pan-Orthodox Conference would also study the matter. Metropolitan Antonie, stressing the importance of baptism for the Orthodox, asked that both the Orthodox and the WCC as a whole study the issue more deeply. Action could not be taken on the basis of the few responses received. Mr Gatu said that many churches agreed on the importance of baptism and that no decision should be made until they had commented on the BEM document. The Executive Committee agreed that the progress report should be kept as an internal document.

The progress report was referred to the Staffing Sub-Committee for further consideration.

At a later session Ms Skuse presented the report of the Staffing Sub-Committee with concrete proposals for action. After discussions and amendment, they were adopted as follows:

i. Regarding the proposal to add a reference to baptism in the WCC Basis (Constitution), there is widespread recognition of the importance of the issue raised as well as deep appreciation for the fidelity which prompted its request. At the same time, however, the churches also now find themselves in the midst of testing their common understanding of baptism in the reception process of the WCC convergence text on 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry'.

ii. In order to assist the churches to move forward together ecumenically with both integrity and consistency, it is recommended that the Faith and Order Secretariat be asked to continue its study of this vital issue, and, following the conclusion of the BEM reception process, to make proposals for the consideration of the Executive and Central Committees.

5. ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONSHIPS

A. Fifth Report of the Joint Working Group

Dr Raiser referred to the discussion of the report in the Executive Committee meetings of February and July 1982 and to the comments made by the Central Committee on the formulation of the WCC's response. Since then the Executive Group of the JWG and the Staff Executive Group had given further consideration to the report, which had been slightly edited, and the response to it. The report as amended was now with the authorities of the parent bodies and, while the official Roman Catholic response was still awaited, it had been agreed to publish the report, in English in The Ecumenical Review, and in German, French and Spanish in other journals.

Dr Raiser presented a draft outline of a response to the report. This comprised sections on: (a) the main features of relationships between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC since the Nairobi Assembly, including the studies on 'Towards a Confession of the Common Faith' and 'Common Witness' and the convergence texts on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry; the difficulties encountered in common action, particularly in the area of social collaboration and the development of initiatives at the local and national rather than international level; (b) the oneness of the ecumenical movement, which raised a number of issues for further study; (c) a shift of emphasis, with particular attention being given to ecumenical learning and formation, and the inclusion in the JWG of members from local church situations.

There was a full discussion of the draft response. Metropolitan Antonie suggested that the presence of the Orthodox in the WCC might provide a model for the Roman Catholic Church. On the theological level the Orthodox had much in common with the RCC, though many other difficulties remained between them.

Metropolitan Gregorios spoke of the fears of the RCC regarding some of the WCC's positions and of the problems created for the

WCC by Rome's insistence on its primacy not only of honour but also of jurisdiction. For the time being major attention should be given to local ecumenism.

Bishop Harms stressed that the WCC should be regarded as a privileged instrument of the ecumenical movement, and spoke of the difficulties encountered in the bilateral conversations between the Evangelical Church in Germany and the RCC.

His Holiness Ilia felt that, despite the difficulties in relationships, the WCC and the RCC should not be afraid of taking steps towards each other.

The Moderator spoke of the wide variety of views held within all churches, which made relations with other churches and with the WCC extremely complex. Churches should speak more clearly about their differences with Rome, and should share within the ecumenical movement the questions raised in bilateral discussions with the RCC.

Metropolitan Chrysostomos referred to the promulgation of the new Codez Iuris Canonici and the 'double ecclesiology' of the RCC, which should be discussed in the JWG and by the Faith and Order Commission.

Mr Leite spoke of the importance of the fellowship of the WCC to minority Protestant churches in countries dominated by the RCC. In their situation it was almost impossible to enter into dialogue. In Portugal ecumenical dialogue had decreased in recent years.

Archbishop Kirill emphasized positive aspects of the clear progress in relations between Roman Catholics and Orthodox and the contribution of Roman Catholic theologians to the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry document. But the new Codex required further study. He agreed that the WCC should become a platform for the exchange of information on bilateral conversations.

Prof. Miguez-Bonino said that the WCC had to face not only the question of the authority of the Pope but also a new centralization in the RCC. The Council should not be over-anxious to establish relations with the central authorities, thereby participating in the internal struggle in the RCC.

Mr Ashmall spoke of the need for the churches which had created the WCC to strengthen their fellowship and commitment to it.

Ms Skuse referred to some of the problems raised by Roman Catholic participation in local and national councils of churches. Heads of churches tended to operate without councils or the involvement of the whole people of God.

Bishop Hempel stressed the need for a clearer self-understanding in contacts with Roman Catholics and the importance of establishing trust among local church leaders.

His Holiness Karekin II felt that the experience which the Orthodox churches had gained through their membership of the WCC should be central in their bilateral discussions with Rome.

The documents were referred to the Programme Sub-Committee.

At a later session His Holiness Karekin II reported that the Programme Sub-Committee had reviewed the draft outline of a response to the Fifth Report of the JWG and submitted a revised document. This was discussed by the Executive Committee. In the paragraph dealing with bilateral conversations examples were given of common concerns which had emerged. It was agreed to amend the wording of these to read: 'such as universal jurisdiction and authority in the church'.

The Executive Committee agreed that the document as revised in the light of the discussion be treated as an internal document and be transmitted to the Vancouver Assembly as a basis for the discussion which will take place there in the Policy Reference Committee on Relationships with a view to enabling the Assembly to respond to the report on behalf of the WCC.

Dr Raiser indicated that if necessary there could be further discussion of the document at the Executive Committee meeting in July.

B. Visit of Pope John Paul II to Geneva

His Holiness Karekin II reported that the Programme Sub-Committee had received information about plans for a visit by Pope John Paul II to the World Council in May/June 1984 as part of a pastoral visit to Switzerland. On the recommendation of the Sub-Committee, the Executive Committee agreed:

i. to approve the initiatives so far taken to prepare for such a visit;

ii. to request the Moderator and the General Secretary to send a letter to the Pope on behalf of the Executive Committee reconfirming the invitation extended earlier; the letter should be accompanied by another letter to the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity making detailed proposals for the programme of the visit;

iii. to instruct the Communication Department to render public the fact of these communications and to give particular attention to communicating the character and eventual results of the visit to member churches.

7. APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION

Ms Skuse presented the applications for membership and affiliation.

A. Applications for membership

a. Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa

It was agreed that the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South

Africa be approved for full membership in the World Council of Churches.

b. Baptist Convention of Nicaragua

It was agreed that the Baptist Convention of Nicaragua be approved for full membership in the World Council of Churches.

c. International Spiritual Baptist Ministerial Council

It was agreed that no action be taken at this time pending further clarification of the membership of this church.

On the recommendation of the Nominations Sub-Committee, the Executive Committee agreed that any further applications for membership which are already in process now may be presented to the Committee in July for action by the Assembly; that documentation on such applications be sent to the Executive Committee in advance of its meeting; and that any applications which are not yet in process or about which any doubt may exist be deferred until 1984.

B. Application for affiliation

It was agreed that the Swaziland Council of Churches be granted the status of an Associate Council of the WCC.

PUBLIC ISSUES

A. South Africa

The General Secretary drew attention to the situation in South Africa where the Eloff Commission had been set up to enquire into the affairs of the South African Council of Churches. The Government prosecution had recommended that SACC be declared an 'affected organization', which would prevent it from receiving any financial support from outside or raising money within South Africa. The General Secretary noted that one of the witnesses had pointed out that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa declares it to be a Christian state. A number of churches and donor agencies were hoping to send representatives to testify to the Commission and demonstrate solidarity with SACC.

After discussion, the Executive Committee agreed:

i. that PCR should keep the Executive Committee and NCCs informed of the situation regarding SACC and advise them of possible patterns of response;

ii. that PCR should be informed if church representatives are refused permission to enter South Africa.

B. Central America

The General Secretary referred to the unsettled situation in Central America. He had sent a pastoral letter to the Council of Churches in Latin America after its inauguration. He had appealed to President Rios Montt of Guatemala for clemency to six young men, but they had just been executed. Prof. Miguez Bonino pointed out that this and other such actions were being carried out in the name of the Christian faith and it was important for the WCC to dissociate itself from them. It was agreed that the General Secretary should send a message to the President deploring the executions.

9. DOCUMENTATION SERVICE

Dr McCloud reported that the Sub-Committee had received an evaluation report of the experimental two-and-a-half-year period of functioning of the Documentation Service.

The importance of this service was recognized and it was therefore recommended that the Documentation Service now become a permanent function of the General Secretariat-related services, attached to the General Secretariat, with a close working relationship with the Library and the Archives of the WCC.

This was agreed.

10. ECUMENICAL HISTORY

Dr McCloud reported that the Sub-Committee had also received a report on a project to publish a third volume of the History of the Ecumenical Movement covering the period 1968-1985.

The Sub-Committee recognized the importance of the ambitious project the preparation of this third volume represents. It suggested that the drafting of such a volume should not be left only to church historians and ecumenists, but involve church leaders from the various regions of the world.

On the recommendation of the Sub-Committee, the Executive Committee agreed:

i. to acknowledge and commend this volume as an important project to be endorsed by the Executive and Central Committees in 1984;

ii. that the detailed preparation of this project for submission to the Executive Committee in February 1984 be entrusted to a small Working Committee appointed by the Officers of the WCC.

11. REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

In addition to its recommendations regarding Assembly participants, the Nominations Sub-Committee discussed and made recommendations on the following matters:

A. Central Committee membership

It was noted that the Rt Rev. Kenneth Woollcombe had resigned his membership on Central Committee and that the Church of England had nominated the Rev. Canon Martin Reardon to take his place. The resignation was received following the Central Committee meeting of 1982 and it was therefore not possible for the Central Committee to act on this formally. Acceptance of Canon Reardon as a replacement for Bishop Woollcombe would enable him to attend the Assembly as a retiring member of Central Committee. Since this was consistent with the Constitution and Rules of the WCC, the Executive Committee agreed to act on behalf of the Central Committee in approving this nomination.

B. Church mergers

It was reported that the United Presbyterian Church in the USA and the Presbyterian Church in the US, both of which are member churches, would vote to merge in June 1983. In December 1982 the WCC Officers had agreed that at the Vancouver Assembly these two churches should retain their previously allocated number of seats but be seated as one church.

The Executive Committee agreed:

i. to approve this recommendation from the Officers;

ii. to establish the same policy with regard to any other church mergers which may take place before the Assembly.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr McCloud presented the report as follows:

1. Review of 1982 financial situation

The Committee will appreciate that it is not yet possible by the middle of February to provide a reliable comprehensive report on the financial outcome of the previous year. The following preliminary report should therefore be treated with caution, although it is believed that the major trends indicated therein are reliable and will be substantiated when the final accounts have been prepared and audited.

1982 was again a year which saw large movements in exchange rates. For example, the dollar started the year at Sfr. 1.80, peaked in the late summer at Sfr. 2.27 and by December was again below Sfr. 2.00, falling to a low of Sfr. 1.93 in January, before stabilizing around the Sfr. 2.00 mark where it is at present. The German mark fluctuated between Sfr. 0.80 and Sfr. 0.87. Other currencies fell during the year, notably the pound sterling, the French franc and the Swedish kronor.

The WCC budget rates for 1982 were US$ = 1.70 and DM = 0.90 Sfr.

All transactions during the year were translated at daily rates. Hence, because of the strong dollar, income in terms of Swiss

francs was higher than budgeted in many sub-units. Undesignated income appears to be slightly below budget.

As in 1981, 1982 was a year of high interest rates, although these declined rapidly in the Autumn. The WCC's policy was to take advantage of these high rates and to invest on a longer term. A restructuring of all investment portfolios was carried out on this basis.

Total investment received in 1982 was in the region of Sfr. 6 million, although most of this relates to project and endowment fund interest. In addition to actual interest received, the decline in interest rates has led to an unrealised capital appreciation in the portfolios.

Undesignated fund position

The expenses that will need to be charged to undesignated income seem to be in the order of 5.3 to 5.4 million Swiss francs, well below the budgeted Sfr. 5,719,347 requirement.

Preliminary estimates indicate that we have received sufficient undesignated income to cover these expenses. It therefore appears that no deficit is to be expected in 1982.

Exchange situation

The Council has not so far had to utilise the exchange fluctuation reserve and Sfr. 2.5 million is available in this fund. First indications are that, due to the tight monetary policy of the Council, there will not be a significant loss on exchange in 1982 and this loss can be absorbed by the interest earnings.

The Finance Sub-Committee recommends that such exchange losses be covered by the 1982 interest earnings.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

Allocation of 1982 interest

The Finance Sub-Committee, in view of the exceptional level of interest earnings in 1982 and of the possible shortfall in Assembly funding, recommends that only 80% of the interest be distributed at this time, and the remainder be held as a contingency amount against such a shortfall.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

If this shortfall does not occur, the Executive Committee in 1984 can reconsider the use of these funds.

2. Income

1983

1983 income has been budgeted on the basis of exchange rate estimates of US$ = Sfr. 1.55 and DM 1 = Sfr. 0.80. While current rates are higher, experience of the last few years counsels

against an upward revision of income budgets for this reason. A number of other factors such as the world economic situation, the publicity the WCC has received through the Reader's Digest article and the '60 Minutes' TV programme and the special appeals for the Sixth Assembly could affect church and agency support for the WCC.

Total income for the year has therefore been conservatively, but reasonably, estimated but the imbalance of income available to different sub-units will continue.

1984

The general situation affecting 1983 income will continue in 1984. Income estimates have therefore been based on largely unchanged original currency programme contributions, to be received at exchange rates of US$ = Sfr. 1.65 and DM = Sfr. 0.85. It has been estimated that undesignated income will rise to Sfr. 6 million partly due to the rise in exchange rates and partly due to the expectation that the increase in giving usually provoked by an Assembly will again occur. Total income is projected to rise to Sfr. 32,820,221 due to the rise in undesignated income, the rise in exchange rates and increased production income. Income from all sources will only cover 91.5% of the 1984 budget. If current projections for 1982 and 1983 prove correct, a further 7.1% of programme expenses can be met from reserves but 1984 will be the last year that sub-units, with the exception of CWME and CICARWS, will be able to draw on reserves to meet current expenses, without reducing these reserves below the minimum fund balance requirements set by Central Committee. There remains one year to adjust income and expenses to put the overall operations of the WCC in balance including the possible use of some of the remaining reserves.

1985 and beyond

It is impossible to predict income patterns for 1985 and beyond. The income that can be developed will largely be determined by the programmes and structures coming out of the Assembly and implemented by the Central Committee in July 1984. It was noted that in 1982 in the USA and Canada, for the first time for some years, transfers from parishes to the national level grew at a rate exceeding inflation. The challenge now is to translate this to the international level.

3. Changes in accounting policy and procedures

The Finance Sub-Committee reviewed the present practices regarding the distribution of interest earned. The possibility of charging interest to funds showing debit balances was also discussed.

The Finance Sub-Committee recommends that the following policies be adopted:

- No positive interest shall be paid unless the net balance of the total funds held by a sub-unit or entity is positive.

- This rule will also apply in the projects sector for project funds held by sub-units.

- It is normal practice within the WCC that third party accounts are settled within 30 days. Interest will become payable to the WCC for balances outstanding for longer periods than three months. Balances beyond six months will become subject to penalty plus interest.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

4. Staff salaries and the cost of living review

During the past year, a joint committee of representatives of SRG and SEG met at the request of the General Secretary in order to carry out a review of the salary scale in accordance with Regulation III 1.09 which states that 'the salary scale shall be reviewed at least once every seven years'.

The committee examined the scale in detail to understand the hypotheses on which the scale was based, its structure, logic and justice and agreed that the basis should be maintained, but that the actual scale did not match up to the basis. This was due to the fact that by introducing cost of living increases on other than a percentage basis, the differential had been reduced, but at the cost of internal logic. The committee reported this situation to the General Secretary and recommended that a new salary scale be introduced that would re-establish the salary scale as it was originally intended. This would have the effect of sizeably increasing the salaries of those in grades 3, 4 and 5, the grades in which it has been most difficult to recruit staff. The cost of introducing such a scale would be 3.2% in a full year.

As at 31 December 1982, the Geneva cost of living index was 209.2 points (September 1966 = 100), which is an increase of 10.4 points or 5.2% on the 198.8 points of 31 December 1981. The matter was discussed with the SRG and SEG, who agreed that, taking the financial situation of the Council into account, a full increase could not be expected. It was recommended that the opportunity should be taken to introduce a revised salary scale. The Finance Sub-Committee recommends that the new salary scale be introduced using the cost of living increase and that a further increase of 1% should be granted. The total cost in a full year would then be 4.2%.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

It is further recommended that the new cost of living index established in Geneva in December be the new point of reference for all future cost of living calculations. As at 31 December 1982, this index was 100.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

5. Financial implications of staff appointments

The Finance Sub-Committee reviewed the financial implications of staff appointments approved by the Staffing Sub-Committee. These appointments are all within the 1983 and 1984 budgets.

6. 1984 budget

The Finance Sub-Committee considered the proposed 1984 budget, reviewing the prior decisions and assumptions on which it is based and the actions taken by staff in attempts to bring it into balance.

The Sub-Committee noted that in spite of these efforts the budget, as presented, forecast a deficit of over Sfr. 500,000 after the inclusion of the Documentation Service but before including a provision for Contingencies (Sfr. 50,000) and allocations to the General Reserve (Sfr. 100,000) and the Reserve for the Seventh Assembly (Sfr. 300,000). The Sub-Committee agreed that these items should be included, even though the deficit would be increased.

The Sub-Committee further noted that the budget would require a reduction of fund balances of over Sfr. 2.5 million, Sfr. 1.5 million being attributable to CICARWS and CWME whose fund balance levels would remain adequate. Sfr. 1 million would be drawn by other sub-units and would reduce their fund balances to the minimum level set by Central Committee. The Sub-Committee therefore felt that 1985 needs had to be taken into account in considering the 1984 proposals.

After discussion of a number of alternatives, the Sub-Committee decided that the 1984 budget was not acceptable in its present form and instructed that a revised budget be brought to the July 1983 meeting of the Executive Committee in which requirements for Undesignated Income would be contained within the Sfr. 6 million expected to be received. The Sub-Committee further requested that a report on the reserves and fund balances held by the WCC also be brought to this meeting.

7. Ecumenical History

The Finance Sub-Committee received a report on the Ecumenical History project. It considers that the tentative information on the cost of this project is unrealistic, and that serious attention needs to be brought to the establishment of a realistic budget after the Assembly. If the Executive Committee agrees to the setting up of a Working Committee for this project, the Finance Sub-Committee recommends that this task be assigned to that group.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

The Finance Sub-Committee further recommends that the matter of funding of the Ecumenical History project be referred to the Executive Committee in 1984, so it can be studied within the context of the various other proposals that may emerge out of the Assembly.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

8. Documentation Service

The Finance Sub-Committee considered the financial implications of the continuation of the Documentation Service. In view of

the fact that this service is to be regarded as a normal function of the General Secretariat-related services, the Finance Sub-Committee recommends that the cost of the Documentation Service be distributed and that staff be instructed to design and apply an appropriate formula for this distribution.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

9. Assembly budget

The Finance Sub-Committee reviewed the Assembly budget and recognized that there is a minimal overrun of the authorized expenditure level and still a certain shortfall of income.

The Finance Sub-Committee discussed the implications of the possible support of the Canadian Government for interpretation equipment in Vancouver. However, in the absence of a final decision by that Government, the Committee feels that time pressures for reserving the considerable amount of equipment require that staff now be authorized to commit the Council for that equipment.

The Finance Sub-Committee recommends that staff be authorized to proceed with the securing of the interpretation equipment necessary for the Assembly.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

10. Computer

The Finance Sub-Committee received a report on the installation of the new computer system, including decisions taken by the Officers in December, in consultation with the Moderator of the Finance Committee, on the purchase of the existing HMS computer and programmes, its installation in the Ecumenical Centre in March 1983 and the commissioning of the Société Fiduciaire Suisse to develop a new accounting system during 1983, and its implementation in 1984. The Finance Sub-Committee noted that all conditions laid down in 1981, including a reduction of computer costs, had been met.

11. Financial charge for portfolio management

The Finance Sub-Committee received a report on the present system of remuneration of the Finance Department for the management of the funds held by the Council, following a question raised by the Executive Committee in July 1982.

After careful consideration by staff of the possibility of charging a fee related to the size of the funds managed and not to that of interest earned, it was felt that this question should be taken up within the context of the establishment of the new Resource Sharing System. The Finance Sub-Committee therefore recommends that the present practice not be changed before the Assembly, and that the question be taken up again within the context of the discussion of the new Resource Sharing System.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

12. Resolution on bank account

The Finance Sub-Committee recommends that the Executive Committee resolve

- that the banking resolution relating to the opening of a bank account with the Toronto Dominion Bank in Canada be approved;

- that the agreement with the Toronto Dominion Bank regarding telex payments be approved.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

13. Expansion of Ecumenical Centre

The Finance Sub-Committee has been informed that the LWF will not make final decisions on long-term plans regarding the need of additional office space before alternative plans have been explored fully with the WCC.

These explorations will be pursued with the WCC staff in the coming months.

14. Provident and Retirement Fund Boards meeting

Matters arising from the meeting of the Provident and Retirement Fund Boards were reported. Among the points raised, it is to be noted that following the action of the Executive Committee in February 1982 the actuarial reserve will absorb the 3% increase of pensions in payment granted as from 1 April 1982 and that therefore there will be no request to the WCC to cover an actuarial deficit on the Fund. However, the actuarial reserve will not allow the increase of deferred pensions that was envisaged.

The Retirement Fund Board decided a further 3% increase of pensions in payment as from 1 April 1983, the cost of which can also be covered by the actuarial reserve.

The Finance Sub-Committee also considered a request regarding membership of the Boards. On advice of the Boards, the Finance Sub-Committee recommends that the present members of the Boards remain in office until new members are nominated after the Assembly.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

15. CCPD

The Finance Sub-Committee received a Financial Progress Report from CCPD, as requested by the Central Committee in July 1982. It was noted that actions taken in 1982 had reduced expenditure to 76% of approved levels, thereby reducing the charge to the Ecumenical Development Fund (EDF). The Committee commends CCPD for these actions and for those taken to reduce expenditure in 1983. The Committee agreed to encourage a review of CCPD budgeting procedures, the use of EDF funds and their distribution

between expenses of partner groups, CCPD or Unit II programmes and CCPD operating expenses and to maintain the 1984 CCPD operating budget at the level foreseen until now, pending a review of possible income. The Finance Sub-Committee requested that a further progress report be presented in July 1983.

16. 'Nairobi to Vancouver' report

The Finance Sub-Committee reviewed the draft of the Finance chapter of the 'Nairobi to Vancouver' report and made comments and suggestions so as to allow the drafting of its final version.

It also requested staff to add a small chapter on such items as property management, the Provident and Retirement Fund Boards, the Investment Advisory Group and the Audit Committee.

Following this review, the Finance Sub-Committee recommends that, in view of the persistence of a number of problems in the finances of the Council, there be joint meetings of the Programme Guidelines Committee and of the Finance Committee during the Assembly so that the relationship between programme and resources be established already at the planning stages of the future work of the Council.

The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation.

Dr McCloud concluded by saying that although, as the report indicated, the Sub-Committee felt that the Council could approach the Assembly without a sense of crisis about the finances of the WCC, it also wished to express some concern about the implementation of programmes after the Assembly unless there was a significant change in the Council's finances.

On behalf of the Sub-Committee, he expressed thanks to members of commissions and working groups and to all the staff, particularly the Finance staff, for their cooperation.

The Executive Committee received the report of the Finance Sub-Committee and accepted its recommendations.

The Moderator thanked Dr McCloud and the members of the Finance Sub-Committee for their work.

13. FUTURE MEETING

It was noted that the Executive Committee would meet in Vancouver, Canada, 21-23 July 1983 (arrival 20 July).

14. CLOSING ACTIONS

Metropolitan Gregorios spoke of the appreciation of the Executive Committee for the work of the Officers and moved a vote of thanks to them, which was carried with acclamation.

The Moderator thanked the members of the Committee for their contributions to its work. He closed the meeting with prayer and the benediction.

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT

Honorary President:	Rev. Dr W.A. Visser 't Hooft
Presidents:	His Holiness Ilia II Hon. Ms Justice A.R. Jiagge Prof. J. Miguez-Bonino Dr T.B. Simatupang Dr C. Wedel
Officers:	Most Rev. E.W. Scott (Moderator) His Holiness Karekin II (Vice-Moderator) Ms J. Skuse (Vice-Moderator) Rev. Dr P.A. Potter (General Secretary)
Members:	His Eminence Metropolitan Antonie Mr H.A. Ashmall Mr Bena-Silu His Eminence Metropolitan Chrysostomos Rev. J.G. Gatu His Eminence Metropolitan Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios Bishop Dr H.H. Harms Bishop Dr J.W. Hempel Rev. Dr Won Yong Kang His Eminence Archbishop Kirill (Goundiaev) Rev. J.M. Leite Rev. Dr J.O. McCloud Rev. Dr D.W. Preus Ms D. Sampath Ms P. Webb
Observers:	Protopresbyter V. Borovoy His Eminence Metropolitan Emilianos Rev. Dr Gordon How
Staff:	Rev. Dr P. Abrecht Rev. Dr S. Amirtham Ms M. Assaad Prof. Dr A.M. Barkat Rev. Dr U. Becker Mr H. van Beek Ms M. Béguin-Austin Rev. J. Blanc Rev. J. Bluck Prof. I. Bria Ms G. Cashmore Mr P. Coïdan Mr T. Davies Rev. Dr K. Hertz Ms R. van Hoogevest Mr W. Jones Dr S. Kingma Rev. S. Kobia Mr N. Koshy

Staff (continued):	Rev. Dr W. Lazareth
	Mr N.J. Maro
	Rev. W. Perkins
	Rev. Dr K. Raiser
	Prof. T. Sabev
	Rev. C. Sintado
	Dr J.B. Taylor
	Dr R. Traitler
	Fr G. Tsetsis
	Mr A. Turnbull
	Rev. B. von Wartenberg
	Rev. Dr H-R. Weber
Interpreters:	Ms I. Friedeberg
	Mr B. Gagua
	Mr M. Voskresensky
	Ms R. Sbeghen
	Ms U. Zierl
Minute writer:	Ms A. Burrows
Administration:	Ms R. Green

APOLOGIES

President:	Most Rev. O. Sundby
Member:	Prof. Kyaw Than

MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Sub-Committee on Finance

Rev. Dr J.O. McCloud (Moderator)
His Eminence Metropolitan Antonie
Mr H.A. Ashmall
Mr Bena-Silu
Bishop Dr H.H. Harms
Most Rev. E.W. Scott
Most Rev. O. Sundby
Dr C. Wedel

Sub-Committee on Programme

His Holiness Karekin II (Moderator)
His Eminence Metropolitan Chrysostomos
Rev. J.G. Gatu
His Eminence Metropolitan Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios
Bishop Dr J.W. Hempel
His Holiness Ilia II
Prof. J. Miguez-Bonino
Rev. Dr D.W. Preus
Prof. Kyaw Than
Ms P. Webb

Sub-Committee on Staffing and Nominations

Ms J. Skuse (Moderator)
Hon. Ms Justice A.R. Jiagge
Rev. Dr Won Yong Kang
His Eminence Archbishop Kirill (Goundiaev)
Rev. J.M. Leite
Ms D. Sampath
Dr T.B. Simatupang

CHART OF PROPOSED VANCOUVER ASSEMBLY PROGRAMME
(approved by Executive Committee)

	8.15-8.45	9.00-10.30	11.00-12.30	14.30-16.00	16.30-18.00	20.00-21.30
Sun 24		WORSHIP		PUBLIC CELEBRATION		
Mon 25	Worship	BUSINESS-MCS	THEME	SG	BUSINESS	
Tues 26		BUSINESS-GS			SUB-THEME 1	REGIONAL
Weds 27		SUB-THEME 2		SUB-THEME 3	BUSINESS	
Thur 28		SUB-THEME 4		CTE		Hearings
Fri 29		Plenary: CANADA				
Sat 30		Plenary: PACIFIC				
Sun 31		Eucharist				Festival of Cultures
Mon 1		ISSUES		IG		
Tues 2		CLUSTER REPORTING				
Weds 3		CLUSTER REPORTING				
Thur 4		Plenary: PEACE & JUSTICE				
Fri 5		REPORTS	REPORTS	REPORTS		WITNESS FOR PEACE & JUSTICE
Sat 6	Orthodox Liturgy	Hearings			REPORTS	
Sun 7	*Visits to local congregations*					
Mon 8		REPORTS	REPORTS		REGIONAL	REGIONAL
Tues 9		REPORTS	REPORTS		REPORTS	
Weds 10		REPORTS	REPORTS	REPORTS		

Worship

Plenary sessions (as indicated)

CTE — Committees

REGIONAL — Regional meetings

SG — Small Groups

Clusters

IG — Issue Groups

Hearings

RESOURCE SHARING SYSTEM AND REGIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

I. RESOURCE SHARING SYSTEM

1. Purpose and categories of funding

The Resource Sharing System aims at 'coordinating all the WCC funding instruments with a view to progressive combination as appropriate' (Central Committee, July 1982). In doing so, its focus is primarily on the quality of sharing.

Therefore the purpose of the Resource Sharing System lies primarily with the different instruments and procedures which are currently used by the WCC for the funding of projects and programmes, additional to the budgets approved by the Central Committee. There are several categories of funding involved:

a. Programme assistance related to the programmatic concern of a particular sub-unit, usually in the form of small amounts of seed money on a short-term basis.

b. Guaranteed funding related to the common cause of a group of partners in relationship to a particular sub-unit, usually with some form of pooling of resources.

c. Funding of third parties related to projects and programmes which are initiated and operated by churches, councils or groups, usually in the form of transfer of funds through a sub-unit.

d. Multilateral funding related to broad programme concerns of one or more sub-units, usually a country programme, consortium or otherwise integrated programme.

e. Funding of relief and rehabilitation related to service activities such as emergencies, refugees, etc. (especially CICARWS).

f. Loans (ECLOF).

The list as yet is neither exhaustive nor definite. Other funding activities which are not adequately described under the above categories may also have to be included in the scope of the Resource Sharing System.

A dossier including the profiles of the various funding instruments and procedures is in preparation.

With regard to programme assistance and similar funding activities involving small amounts of money, it will be necessary further to define their place in the system since these types of funding are often an integral part of a sub-unit programme. Common criteria and procedures could be developed. The coordination of programme assistance should not impinge on the required flexibility. Similarly it is understood that the confidentiality of certain funding processes will be fully respected.

This being stated, the tasks, organization and location of the system as proposed in the following paragraphs are intended to provide the basic frame so that it can begin to meet its purpose.

2. Tasks

The task of the Resource Sharing System is not to centralize funding, but in order to make the system more effective it requires:

a. Relationships:
   - facilitating activities of ecumenical dialogue and consultation on resource sharing issues;
   - maintaining working relationships with churches, councils, agencies for service and mission, etc., on questions concerning the implementation of the Resource Sharing System.

b. Administrative responsibility:
   - coordinating the instruments of the system, i.e. Resource Sharing Book, Listing Service, financial reporting, etc., as well as the funding procedures of the sub-units;
   - coordinating the regional resource sharing groups (see point 5);
   - preparing the work of the Resource Sharing Task Force.

3. Organization and location

In order to organize the above tasks it is necessary to establish a service which relates to the different sub-units and can assume the administrative responsibilities. Such a service may be small and thereby flexible, but it needs to be operational. It is therefore proposed to set up an Office on Resource Sharing which should relate and report to the General Secretariat through one of the Deputy General Secretaries.

In terms of working relationships the Office on Resource Sharing should be in close cooperation with:

a. Sub-units. All the relevant sub-units will be equally involved in the new system. The Office will work closely together with the area desks of CICARWS which are already serving other sub-units and could do more so through improved working methods.

b. Regional staff task forces. Inasmuch as the role of regional task forces will be strengthened (see under II.3d), it will be necessary to establish consultation on resource sharing policies, regional groups, etc.

c. OICD. The Office on Resource Sharing and OICD should work together internally on coordination and monitoring of funding mechanisms and financial reporting, and externally in their relationships with churches and agencies. The two Offices will complement each other in the fulfilment of their respective functions, both operating at the same level under the General Secretariat and linked together through the Resource Sharing Task Force on which OICD is represented.

4. Involvement of constituency

The preceding paragraphs deal mainly with the implications of the system as it applies internally to the WCC. Obviously the ongoing involvement of the churches, councils, agencies and ecumenical groups is equally important. The implementation of the Resource Sharing System is a process that will take several years. A major event which enabled the participation of a large cross-section of the constituency was the consultation held at Glion in February 1982. Future consultation with the constituency might be organized in a similar way, globally as well as regionally or nationally. It could be on resource sharing as such or on a particular aspect, like the consultation on government funding held recently. Already the need is felt for a follow-up meeting to the Glion consultation in the course of 1984. Therefore it is proposed to maintain this consultative method for constituency involvement until such time as a more structured solution may become desirable and possible.

5. Regional resource sharing groups

(According to the Terms of Reference appended to the Central Committee Minutes of July 1982, the Resource Sharing Task Force submits proposals to the Executive Committee for the mandate, appointment and functioning of regional groups.)

The report to Central Committee in July 1982 says that regional groups will have a central place in the Resource Sharing System. Up to now there have been CICARWS screening groups. These should be modified to become new regional resource sharing groups with the participation of all relevant sub-units and with a new mandate and new functions. Instead of screening their major task will be to promote common objectives and priorities for the sharing of resources in the region. They will explore ways to promote national screening and to make it more effective. The groups will fulfill an advisory and consultative role on resource sharing for the WCC.

In the formation of new regional groups the particularities of the regions must be taken into account. There is no uniform model since the situations vary from region to region.

It is proposed to form regional resource sharing groups according to certain principles applicable to all groups and to work out the specific points for each region, in consultation with the regional ecumenical body, the regional task force and the regional screening group meeting this year. The first meetings of these groups should be arranged to take place in 1984.

a. Interim mandate, composition and appointment of regional resource sharing groups

i. Mandate
The mandate must be seen in terms of a process over a period of several years, similar to the Terms of Reference of the Resource Sharing Task Force. It is a mandate for resource sharing, including spiritual and human resources:

- to foster the reflection on the ecumenical sharing of resources, involving the churches, councils, network groups, etc., in a process of discussion on the issues of mission, service, development, on priorities and criteria as well as on projects and programmes;
- to help the churches realize more fully their potentialities for resource sharing;
- to facilitate inter-action of churches and network groups;
- to build up a common trust between the different sub-units/networks, starting with the sharing of information on projects and programmes, leading to new ways of pooling and sharing of resources and decision-making;
- to facilitate suitable ways for screening, taking into account the existing procedures of sub-units and including promotion of screening at the national level.

ii. Composition

The regional groups must be representative of the programmatic involvement of the WCC in the region (through the various sub-units and their networks) and of the ecumenical movement in the region (churches, councils, ecumenical groups, etc.). In the composition the following elements must be taken into account:

- the 'programmatic' and 'regional' representation must be seen as a guideline rather than a rigid principle since they are often combined in one and the same person;
- the regional ecumenical council and the churches in the region should feel that they are sufficiently represented and involved;
- the fund-raising churches or their agencies for mission and service should be represented;
- the groups may vary from region to region because of the differences between the regions but they should all reflect the same basic principles.

iii. Appointment

The regional groups will be appointed by the WCC, which will be responsible for the 'programmatic' as well as the regional representation. The regional ecumenical council will be invited to nominate its representative(s). Accountability will be with the WCC. Appointment will be monitored by the Resource Sharing Task Force with final approval by the Executive Committee. Procedures should include:

- for 'programmatic' representation, to consult with all concerned sub-units/networks;
- for regional representation, to consult with the churches and the regional ecumenical council, seeking their advice on criteria for membership and asking them to suggest names;
- for the representation of fund-raising churches/agencies, to work out in consultation with them an appropriate way to be collectively represented; as

for their status, they should be observers at the 1984 meetings, after which a proposal for their future participation should be formulated;
- after a first selection, the Resource Sharing Task Force should seek the advice of the regional task force on the overall proposed composition of the group, and then advise SEG on the recommendation to be submitted to the Executive Committee;
- as for the term of the regional groups, a period of three years would seem to be a reasonable span of time to bring the process as indicated under the Mandate to a certain stage of completion; the groups should meet annually;
- the size of the groups should not exceed 20-25 members.

b. The specific points to be worked out for each region include:
- to review the understanding of the regional ecumenical body regarding its involvement in resource sharing;
- to agree on the degree of participation of the regional ecumenical body in the regional group and its share in responsibility/accountability;
- to work out the consultative process for regional representation (see under (c), second item);
- to determine specific items for the mandate if required.

c. The proposed time-table is:
- approval of the present proposals by the Executive Committee meeting 28 February - 4 March 1983;
- consultation with the regional groups meeting in March/April 1983 and with the regional ecumenical bodies on specific points for each region;
- selection of names and approval by the Executive Committee or the Officers in the course of 1983;
- first meetings early 1984;
- A 'Glion follow-up' meeting composed of representatives of the new regional groups, of fund-raising churches, agencies, mission boards, of regional ecumenical councils and core-groups of new commissions; this world consultation should take place immediately after the new regional groups have had their first meetings (April or May 1984);
- report to the Executive Committee in July 1984 for review.

II. REGIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. Introduction

In the course of the review of WCC structures, policies and working methods, it became clear that particular attention had to be given to the question of future relationships with churches and ecumenical partners in the various regions. The need for such a review of 'regional relationships' had also emerged clearly in the course of the discussion about a new Resource Sharing System. In the meeting of the SEG on 30 September 1982, the General Secretary therefore suggested that a special staff group be appointed 'to review the present situation, consider suggestions made by the Units, consult the regional task forces, and bring proposals to the SEG'.

The task force was then appointed by the SEG on 28 October, and has since then held four meetings. It was clear from the beginning that the task force would have to work in close coordination with the Resource Sharing Task Force, given the linkage between the issues concerned. The task force has understood itself as an ad hoc group, with the assignment to prepare a paper for presentation to the Executive Committee, as part of a composite presentation on the review of structures, policies and working methods.

2. Insights gained so far

Regional relationships have received increased attention in recent years, particularly through the process of team visits in preparation for the Sixth Assembly. Any review of the present situation has to acknowledge the fact that a number of earlier initiatives have been undertaken; these include the work of the Secretariat for Relationships with national and regional councils from 1968-1972, the surveys of Roman Catholic participation in conciliar structures at local, national and regional levels, carried out under the sponsorship of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches, as well as the attempt following the meeting of the Central Committee in Jamaica, 1979, to initiate a process of consultation with the regional ecumenical organizations.

One of the results of these earlier efforts was the growing awareness of the great diversity which characterizes ecumenical structures in the various regions. This has consequences for the relationships of the WCC with regional and national ecumenical organizations, with member churches and specific networks of programmatic partners. Each of the regional staff task forces in the WCC prepared a profile of the ecumenical situation in the respective region, with particular attention given to WCC relationships with the constituency. A dossier including these various regional profiles is under preparation.

The regional profiles served as the basis for intensive discussion in the task force. The following points are an attempt to summarize the main insights emerging from this discussion.

a. Given the diversity and complexity of the various national and regional situations, it appears unrealistic to aim at a general statement of WCC policy on regional relationships that would do justice to the different histories, structures, policies and agendas of ecumenical bodies in the various regions. At the same time, the need to acknowledge this diversity challenges the WCC to clarify the understanding of its own role, its 'integrity' with regard to relationships with regional and national situations.

b. The WCC, by its own Constitution, is a council of churches. Any reflection about regional relationships therefore must start from the basic fact that the member churches are the primary partners of the WCC in its relationships with the constituency. Promoting the ecumenical movement at the local, national and also regional level is an integral part of the responsibility of the WCC with its member churches.

As a world council of churches, the WCC has its particular task and responsibility in taking up the trans-regional or global aspects of relationships between the churches over against the purely national or regional aspects. Having said this, it should be added that of course all ecumenical organizations, whether on local, national, regional or global level, affirm that they exist in order to serve the churches in their mission. The WCC, regional conferences of churches, and national councils of churches, face the same challenge of becoming more fully rooted in the life of the churches themselves. This need therefore has to take precedence over the concern for the relationships between various ecumenical structures. Neither of them can substitute for the others, but there is a complementarity of relationships with the churches which could be used more consciously than has been the case so far.

c. The scope of the enquiry therefore has to be extended beyond the question of regional relationships and has to include the sub-regional or national levels. This means, however, that the variety and diversity will further increase. In some instances, the development of viable national ecumenical structures is considered as a high priority, whereas in other countries long-established national councils have progressively lost influence on the ecumenical process.

Many councils, due to their dependency on foreign funding, are still considered as 'foreign' bodies, or are under the direct institutional control of the national church leaders with little room for innovative ecumenical initiative. In some other cases, the national councils have been so active and successful in promoting the ecumenical cause of common witness and service that the churches tend to keep a certain distance from them.

In a number of countries, the presence of a large established majority church creates obstacles for a viable conciliar structure, and the majority of existing national councils have difficulties in relating to ecumenical grassroots initiatives, action groups, etc. This complexity and diversity of ecumenical structures on the national level presents a constant challenge to the WCC in its efforts to develop 'more truly sustained and sustaining relationships' with and among the churches (cf. Breaking Barriers, Nairobi, 1975, Report of Section II, paras 20,21). The WCC should strive to contribute to a renewal and strengthening of ecumenical commitment at all levels.

d. In addition to member churches and councils, as well as world ecumenical organizations like the WSCF, the World YMCA and YWCA, a number of new ecumenical agencies have developed over the last ten years on local, national and regional levels. In Europe and North America a number of regional ecumenical associations and coalitions have been formed, which are only loosely related to existing ecumenical structures on national or regional level, but which have become important counterparts for WCC work. Several religious orders have made the ecumenical movement the focus of their commitment.

In other cases, the WCC itself has directly participated in the creation of ecumenical groups and organizations in response to its programmatic thrusts, and has tried to establish linkages and networks between partners in the various countries and regions. Any future policy on relationships must include these partners in a comprehensive perspective.

In particular, the WCC cannot escape the responsibility of inter-relating member churches and networks of ecumenical groups in critical dialogue, and this responsibility ultimately has to be shared by regional ecumenical conferences and national councils of churches.

e. A further feature with some influence on regional relationships is the fact that Christian World Communions and evangelical organizations like World Vision have increased their visible presence in many regions, and are deeply involved with a growing number of WCC member churches. The Roman Catholic Church occupies a very special place in this context. Consultations which have taken place with at least some of these bodies have focused on the question whether in fact we serve the one and the same ecumenical movement and respond to a common ecumenical agenda. The ecumenical movement certainly is broader than the WCC; but the WCC remains the most comprehensive instrument of the ecumenical movement in the world today. The WCC has the responsibility to maintain the integrity of the ecumenical movement, recognizing that its constitutional functions focus on the call to unity and common witness, mission and service, as well as renewal (cf. WCC Constitution, Art. III).

f. The team visits in preparation for the Vancouver Assembly have confirmed the basic conviction that relationships with member churches should receive priority attention in any future policy. The WCC must be prepared to invest more time and resources in <u>being with</u> its member churches in ways that are acknowledged by them. It is equally clear, however, that the WCC in its efforts to reach its member churches cannot bypass existing ecumenical structures on national and regional levels, but should work towards the closest possible inter-linkage in relationships with the constituency.

3. <u>Elements for a future policy and structure</u>

a. The first and most important conclusion for future policies, structures and working methods of the WCC is that programmatic and relational emphases should be treated on the same level. This has been true in the work of some sub-units - notably CICARWS, CWME, Education, Youth and more recently CCPD - and it is clear that no programme of the WCC can be or is being carried out without entering into intensive relationships with churches and other partners. It is probably fair to say, however, that the basic rationale for WCC policies, structures and working methods has so far been derived from programmatic concerns.

It would mean a basic change in orientation if the relational responsibilities of the WCC - i.e. being and sharing with member churches in their totality - were acknowledged by all sub-units as fully as the programmatic commitments, in terms of the allocation of resources both material and personnel, the use of time, and structural provision.

b. Once the claim regarding the independent validity of the relational emphasis has been made, the second basic affirmation has to be added immediately.

Programmes, relationships, and resource sharing have to be seen as inter-related ways in which the WCC responds to its mandate. All programme units must share equally in the responsibility for fostering relationships, including the sharing of resources and processes of ecumenical learning. The programmes of the WCC are not an end in themselves but are ways of focusing the basic ecumenical calling, i.e. to manifest visibly the fellowship among the churches which is the gift of God in Christ.

c. The future instrumentalities of the WCC for relating to its constituency in the broadest sense must be flexible enough to take into account the specificities and differences of partners on national and regional level - i.e. member churches, regional conferences, networks, ecumenical organizations and other agencies. This requires of the WCC the ability to monitor, coordinate and foster multiple relationships in a conscious manner which overcomes the present uncoordinated and decentralized mode of operation.

d. From the discussion so far, it emerges that the regional staff task forces will continue to be the most important structural elements for some time to come. Membership of these task forces should not be limited to staff from the region. In order to ensure the linkage between programmes and relationships, it is suggested that there be at least one person in each Programme Unit and in the General Secretariat, who, in addition to a programmatic assignment, would have the further responsibility of serving as a link with a given region. These persons would compose the core of the regional task force.

Provision would have to be made to ensure that the regional task force is consulted prior to any programmatic initiative which might touch a given region. The members of the task force would have to develop a system of continuously monitoring developments in the churches and countries in their respective region, and to advise appropriate authorities of the WCC as required.

The regional task forces should be obliged to report regularly to the SEG.

e. Two further needs have been identified, but no satisfactory structural response has so far been found. The first concerns the visible acknowledgement of regional relationships

as part of the highest executive responsibility of the WCC. The present arrangement, which places area secretaries in one of the commissions - i.e. CICARWS - and assigns limited regional responsibilities among members of the General Secretariat, may have to be revised, in order to provide for more conscious coordination of these various assignments on the level of the General Secretariat, and to provide for a clearer point of reference for the various partners in the region.

Several proposals for an eventual re-location of the area secretaries or the re-establishment of a senior staff position for relationships with national and regional councils have been made and are still being discussed.

f. The other need arises on the level of the Governing Bodies of the WCC - i.e. Central and Executive Committee. At present, all the advisory instruments - i.e. commissions and working groups - have been constituted according to programmatic criteria, and there is no instrumentality outside the staff task forces to advise the WCC Governing Bodies officially on policy questions regarding regional relationships. The new regional resource sharing groups have a more specific and limited mandate and should not be expected to serve this wider purpose.

Consideration should therefore be given to the proposal of convening a consultation of representatives of WCC member churches in each region at least once between two assemblies. It has further been suggested that ways be found to bring together for occasional meetings persons with official responsibilities in the WCC, i.e. Assembly delegates, members of Central Committee and of commissions. Such meetings could be held on the national or regional level. The national and regional ecumenical bodies should be fully involved in order to avoid the formation of further competing networks.

g. Apart from these considerations regarding future structures and instrumentalities, the review of regional relationships carried out by the regional staff task forces strongly suggests that visits and consultations with member churches should become a regular feature in the period following the Assembly. The concept of team visits should be further elaborated on the basis of experiences gathered during the pre-Assembly visitation process. The hope would be that, in future, each member church could be visited at least once between two assemblies by an ecumenical team. In preparing for such future team visits, every effort should be made to involve the regional and national ecumenical organizations concerned in the planning of the visit, the composition of the team, and the eventual choice of a particular focus for the programme of the visit. The visits could in fact become occasions where the member churches can experience the wholeness of the ecumenical movement rather than having to relate separately to various ecumenical agencies at the same time.

h. It is obvious that these proposals will require a reallocation of resources - i.e. time, staff and funds - which are presently bound up with programmatic commissions and secretariats. It is clear that a conscious investment in the area of relationships like the one proposed above may pose new problems for the existing relationships with regional and national ecumenical structures and lead to internal tensions in the WCC about the allocation of resources. The basic criterion which has been used in formulating these proposals is the question: What is needed in order to make the WCC more fully a world-wide fellowship of churches? It is the conviction of the task force that the reference to the future programmatic agenda of the WCC is only one part of the answer and that the other part must be provided by a conscious policy regarding relationships with the churches on national and regional levels.

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With reference to the recommendations of the Central Committee in July 1982 (Minutes, pp. 48, 68-70), the sub-committee recommends that the Executive Committee receive the report, and also recommends:

i. the setting up of an Office on Resource Sharing related to the General Secretariat through one of the Deputy General Secretaries;

ii. the formation of WCC regional resource sharing groups with a view to arranging for the first meetings in 1984;

iii. the formation of regional task forces composed of staff with regional assignments from each Programme Unit and the General Secretariat.